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1963/04/24

SUBJECT: DOD-State Paper, "U-2 Flights, Cuba -- Contingency Plans"

Attached is a revision of the POD-State paper incorporating all those changes recommended by JCSM 325-63 which were acceptable to me and the Secretary of State. You will note that subparagraph 3.d. has been reworded in such a way as to meet the concern of the JCS that there be no precommitment against an invasion of Cuba.

It is anticipated that the paper, in its present form, will be used for discussions with the President at an early date.

/s/ ROBERT S. McNAMARA

Attachment
As stated above

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88-TS-116
DOC # (3)
STATE DOC (39)

DOD-STATE PAPER

U-2 FLIGHTS, CUBA - CONTINGENCY PLANS (C)

1. Problem. The possibility exists that Soviet/Cuban forces may shoot down, or attempt to shoot down, a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft over Cuba. The purpose of this report is to develop a series of actions to be considered by the United States in advance of and after the event.

2. Facts Bearing on the Problem

a. U-2 flights are currently conducted over Cuba at the rate of approximately two sorties per day.

b. Alternative methods of carrying on surveillance are available but the quantity of data that could be obtained by these alternative methods is smaller than that obtainable with the U-2; thus, the available alternatives would not meet presently stated requirements. A prolonged hiatus in high altitude surveillance would be intolerable in view of the continuing Soviet option of reintroduction of IREMs and MREMs.

c. While not a certainty, present intelligence resources give a considerable degree of confidence that Washington should have reliable information on the destruction of a U-2 by a SAM shortly after the attack. There is also a probability that correspondingly reliable information would be available with respect to an unsuccessful firing of a SAM on a U-2. A possibility exists that a U-2 could be attacked by MIG aircraft using air-to-air rockets and special attack techniques. In this case also, information would probably be available promptly. However, there remains a possibility that a U-2 could disappear under circumstances in which we had no positive information on the cause of its loss.

3. Political Considerations

a. Balancing Objectives - The optimum objective with regard to this contingency is to deter the attack on the U-2 by giving private

and public assurances that the US reaction to such an attack would be prompt, firm, and effective. The fundamental political judgment to be made in connection with the attack itself involves balancing the opportunity to make progress toward our long-term objective vis-a-vis Cuba (the overthrow of Castro's regime and elimination of Communism from Cuba) with our objectives vis-a-vis the US-USSR confrontation. The political and power realities, including the USSR's capability to react in Berlin or elsewhere, argue against arbitrary and unilateral action, without provocation, to eliminate Castro. The exploitation of contingencies is the only politically feasible means for taking steps, in the immediate future, to apply US military power directly to reduce Castro's power and influence. Yet obviously, no single contingency can be said to offer the last chance to move against Castro. Moreover, in any new major confrontation over Cuba the United States will be facing a Khrushchev who has reflected on the lessons of the missile crisis and who will be less likely to retreat before US power. Thus, the United States must consider the USSR's capability to react to a second Cuban crisis by actions in Berlin or elsewhere.

b. The context of the attack - It is judged that the USSR would be likely to deliver an official warning prior to an attack on a U-2. In the event that an attack is conducted, therefore, without advance warning, allowance should be made for the possibility that there was a failure of USSR command and control procedures by providing for a minimum response, initially, while attempting to ascertain Soviet intent by all means available. For the same reason, in a case where USSR responsibility is in doubt, the US might desire to take an initial public position that holds Castro rather than Khrushchev responsible.

c. Advance notification and consultation - Secretary Rusk has recently informed the North Atlantic Council of US concern that there may be an attack on a U-2 over Cuba. Consultation with our Allies after a Soviet warning or a Soviet attack probably would become known to the

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USSR. The longer the period of direct or indirect warning thus given to Khrushchev, the more opportunity he is given to make threats of retaliation from which he would find it difficult to withdraw, thus increasing the dangers of escalation, causing confusion among our Allies, and inhibiting their decision to support the United States. On the other hand prior knowledge acquired by the USSR could provide the deterrent effect suggested above. Moreover, once a specific indication of intent to attack is received, or an attack occurs, the retention of political support of our allies argues for as much notice as possible of our intentions.

d. Options - The plans which follow provide for a spectrum of response against the presupposed contingencies. The decision as to the specific degree of force to be applied within this spectrum is a matter for determination at the time of the attack on the U-2 and is dependent on evaluation of latest intelligence and the existing political dynamics. The removal of a facility of the same type (SAM, MIG airfield, AA battery) as the weapon which attacks the U-2 has the virtue of a limited, eye-for-an-eye retribution before the world. Retaliation against a single SAM site regardless of the type of the offending weapon retains the political advantage of a limited response and has the additional feature of orienting action against the weapons system we are most interested in removing.

Both of the foregoing options can be made relatively surgical in nature in order to provide minimum offense to the USSR. The elimination of all facilities of any one weapons system (SAM, MIGs, AA batteries) or all air defense systems would provide progressively larger steps toward the elimination of the Castro regime but might be considered of such proportion by Khrushchev as to make counter Soviet retaliation mandatory. It is also possible that the shock effect of such vigorous response could lead to a decision by the USSR to cut her losses and gradually withdraw from Cuba. US retaliation by elimination of one facility and subsequent

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large-scale surveillance at low levels deprives the US of required high altitude coverage and cannot safely be continued indefinitely.

Any of the foregoing options could be combined with a decision to reinstitute a partial or total quarantine. Total quarantine, if maintained, could serve to bring Castro down. At the very least, it would provide a negotiable application of force from which to bargain in the Security Council in exchange for Soviet concessions.

The foregoing options might be made more palatable to the USSR by (a) taking the public position that Castro had been the perpetrator of the attack; (b) renewing the US offer to work out on the ground inspection of Cuba and the Caribbean (coupled with a general settlement such as withdrawal of Soviet troops) to eliminate the need for future aerial surveillance; (c) making it clear that the foregoing reprisals were not intended as a prelude to an invasion. This would leave open the decision to invade if required in the event of escalation by Cuba or by the USSR in Cuba or elsewhere.

4. Military Considerations

a. Prompt, but deliberate, retaliatory measures should be taken following the shooting down of a U-2 and, in certain circumstances, in event of an unsuccessful attack against a U-2. After certain precautionary measures are taken, including the evacuation of noncombatants from Guantanamo and the initiation of reinforcement of that base, it is feasible to make a retaliatory attack on a Cuban military facility or facilities at first light on the morning of the day following the shooting down of a U-2, weather permitting.

b. US response to an attack by SAM site, MIG, or AA battery should be against one or more Cuban military facilities. Where retaliation is to be taken against a single facility, it should normally be a SAM site selected to meet the following criteria: It should be as close as feasible to the location of the incident but should be selected for accessibility of attack and for isolation from populated areas to minimize noncombatant casualties.

5. Range of Circumstances. In the event of the shooting down, or the attempted shooting down of a U-2 over Cuba, a wide variety of circumstances may attend the incident:

a. With public advance warning by the USSR either through press media or through official governmental communications and/or other indicators of imminent Soviet/Cuban action:

(1) Pre-attack

- (a) Public threat only
- (b) Covert indicators or official governmental communications.

(2) Unsuccessful attack

- (a) Demonstrable and persuasive evidence
- (b) Doubtful evidence

(3) Successful attack

b. Without public advance warning and other indicators of imminent Soviet/Cuban action:

- (1) Unsuccessful attack
- (2) Successful attack

6. Courses of Action to be Considered

a. With public advance warning by the USSR and/or other indicators of imminent Soviet/Cuban action:

(1) Pre-attack

(a) Public threat only - If the warning is limited to public threat, unaccompanied by confirming intelligence indicators of imminent Soviet/Cuban action, the United States should inform Khrushchev that the flights will continue.

(b) Covert indicators and/or official governmental communications - If advance warning is obtained through covert means and/or official governmental communications, with or without public warning:

U-2 flights should be suspended while military preparations

are initiated by Establishment of appropriate conditions of readiness in all US commands and readiness is improved for evacuation of noncombatants from and reinforcement of Guantanamo. The fact of increased readiness would almost immediately become public. U-2 flights should be suspended. Enemy intentions may be verified by flying target drones, for a limited time. If these drones are not fired upon, U-2 flights will be resumed. If the target drones are fired upon, consideration will be given to taking out all or selected SAM sites, or substituting photographic drones and low-level reconnaissance for U-2 flights. U-2 flights will be resumed where there is reasonable prospect that they will not be fired upon. Adequate surveillance of Cuba requires that any hiatus in U-2 flights be limited in time.

(2) Unsuccessful attack

(a) Demonstrable and persuasive evidence - In the event that public advance warning or other data provides demonstrable and persuasive evidence that an attack has been made, the United States should:

1. At the time of the decision to take reprisal action, declare appropriate conditions of readiness in all US commands (if not already in effect), and initiate evacuation of dependents from and reinforcement of Guantanamo.

2. Initiate military preparations for an attack early the next day.

3. Alternatives: Conduct the attack on one, several or all SAM sites. Before resuming U-2 flights, check enemy intentions by flying target drones. If these drones are not fired upon, U-2 flights will be resumed. If the target

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drones are fired upon, consideration will be given to
taking out all of selected SAM sites, or substituting
photographic drones and low-level reconnaissance for U-2

flights. U-2 flights will be resumed when there is
reasonable prospect that they will not be fired upon.
Adequate surveillance of Cuba requires that any hiatus
in U-2 flights be limited in time.

(b) Doubtful evidence - In spite of public advance
warning, an unsuccessful attack may occur in circumstances
which make it impossible to provide demonstrable and
persuasive evidence that an attack has in fact been made.
In such a case, the United States should assess the situation
in the light of circumstances existing at the time and apply
flexible, selective measures ranging from no response to
those measures specified in subparagraphs (2) (a), 1, 2, and
3, above.

(3) Successful attack

(a) At the time of the decision to execute reprisal
attacks, the United States should declare an appropriate
condition of readiness in all US commands (if not already in
effect), and initiate evacuation of dependents from and
reinforcement of Guantanamo.

(b) Initiate military preparations for reprisal action
early the next day.

(c) Alternatives:

1. Alternative I - Conduct an attack on all SAM sites.
2. Alternative II - Destroy one SAM site; thereafter,
until safety of U-2s can be assured, or for a limited
time, fly only low-level reconnaissance and photo drones.

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b. Without public advance warning and other indicators of imminent Soviet action.

(1) Unsuccessful Attack

(a) In light of assessment made at the time, make military preparations by establishment of appropriate conditions of readiness in all US commands and by evacuation of dependents from and preparations for reinforcement of Guantanamo.

(b) U-2 flights should be suspended while these preparations are being made.

(c) After preparations are made, publicly announce that an unsuccessful attack was made.

(d) Execute reprisal attack against one SAM site; then either resume U-2 flights, or test enemy intentions with target drones. If these drones are not fired upon, U-2 flights will be resumed. If the target drones are fired upon, consideration will be given to taking out all or selected SAM sites, or substituting photographic drones and low-level reconnaissance for U-2 flights for a limited time. U-2 flights will be resumed when there is reasonable prospect that they will not be fired upon. Adequate surveillance of Cuba requires that any hiatus in U-2 flights be limited in time.

(2) Successful Attack

(a) At the time of the decision to attack a site, declare an appropriate condition of readiness in all US commands, initiate evacuation of dependents from and reinforcement of Guantanamo.

(b) Initiate military preparations for and conduct reprisal attack early the next morning on one or more of the SAM sites, depending on the circumstances.

(c) Execute reprisal attack against one, several, or all SAM sites. Before resuming U-2 flights, check enemy intentions

by flying target drones. If these drones are not fired upon, U-2 flights will be resumed. If the target drones are fired upon, consideration will be given to taking out all or selected SAM sites, or substituting photographic drones and low-level reconnaissance for U-2 flights for a limited time. U-2 flights will be resumed when there is reasonable prospect that they will not be fired upon. Adequate surveillance of Cuba requires that any hiatus in U-2 flights will be limited in time.

e. Concomitant Political Initiatives. In each of the foregoing cases, the United States should consider concomitant political initiatives as follows (parenthetical portions that follow are applicable only to those cases in which a retaliatory attack on a site is to be made):

- (1) Inform North Atlantic Council (immediately prior to attack).
 - (2) Transmit Presidential messages to Macmillan, Adenauer, de Gaulle, Fanfani.
 - (3) Inform Organ of Consultation of Organization of the American States of the situation and US intentions.
 - (4) Transmit instructions to USUN to inform Secretary General, United Nations at time of attack or clear warning and call for immediate Security Council meeting.
 - (5) Transmit message from President to Khrushchev - giving it simultaneously to Soviet Ambassador in Washington (deliver at time of attack).
 - (6) Issue public statement by the President, including message to the Cuban people (at the time of the attack).
 - (7) If the Soviets wholly or partially blockade Berlin in response to US retaliation, immediately convene Quadripartite Group to consider implementation of "Preferred Sequence" courses of action with respect to Berlin.
- d. Subsequent Military Action. If strike aircraft used in the

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retaliatory strike against a single site are shot down, additional

retaliation action would be taken against appropriate Cuban targets.

e. U-2 is missing with confirmation lacking as to cause. No action should be initiated until there is confirmation that the disappearance is the result of a Soviet/Cuban attack; then the United States should proceed in accordance with subparagraph 6 a (3) or 6 a (2), as appropriate.

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THIS DOCUMENT DENIED IN FULL

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